

Remarks

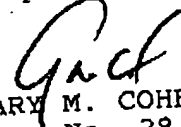
Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested, particularly as herein amended.

The Office Action of January 14, 2004, which has been made final, rejects claims 10, 11, 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by a U.S. patent to Brockway et al. (No. 4,684,344). Claims 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over a proposed combination of Brockway et al. with a U.S. patent to Johnson (No. 5,098,298), and claims 28 to 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over a proposed combination of Brockway et al. with a U.S. patent to Bender (No. 5,707,234). It is further indicated that claims 13 and 14 would be allowable if suitably rewritten.

Responsive to the requirements of 37 C.F.R. §1.116, and pursuant to Section 714.12 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, independent claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claim 13, and the intervening dependent claims 11 and 12. Claims 11 to 13 have been canceled and the dependencies of claims 14 and 15 have been correspondingly amended. Claims 26 to 30 have been retained in the application, as previously presented. Claims 16 to 25, which are directed to subject matter which has been withdrawn from consideration responsive to earlier restriction and election requirements, have been canceled.

It is submitted that the foregoing operates to place the present patent application in condition for allowance and corresponding action is earnestly solicited. In the event that the foregoing is not deemed to place the present application in condition for allowance, and recognizing that the Office Action of January 14, 2004, has been made final, a "Notice of Appeal" has been enclosed with this Reply to serve as a timely-filed response to the Office Action of January 14, 2004, and to avoid an abandonment of the present application. Any fees required for this filing can be charged to Deposit Account No. 03-2405.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. (703) 872-9306) on July 14, 2004.

Date: 7/14/04   
Gary M. Cohen, Esq.